

it saddened me and a feeling of revulsion and disgust succeeded. And these feelings I have always experienced whenever I have witnessed some Indian ceremony, whether marriage, funeral, dance or council. Here are men and women who differ indeed very little from their children; rational beings whose intellect has been kept in a stagnant condition. Who is to blame for this? The Government? Well I should answer—yes and no—at least not the Government alone, but the Nation at large; for the Nation in this glorious republic makes the Government and shapes the course of its administration, more so perhaps in Indian affairs than in any other branch of its business.

It has always been the constant policy of this Nation to keep the Indians on the move, always pushing them on the outskirts of our civilized communities, always disturbing them whenever they have made some kind of a start in agriculture—always clamoring, agitating and scheming for legislation and administrative acts that will rob the last Indian of the last foot of landed property; and he, "*de par Dieu*" the first lord and rightful owner of this glorious land of America!

It does not look as though we wanted the Indian civilized, but rather as if the Nation wanted him to be got out of the way, and that by any means; by the bullet of the frontiersman or of the soldiers, the malversations of the Agent, the whisky and poisoned wares of the trader.

That the Indian is a spoiled child is but too evident. But here let me ask again, who is to be blamed for it? A child may be spoiled in two ways; either by dealing with him in a harsh and cruel manner, or by unjudiciously humoring him—the worst results will be attained by using alternately these two kinds of treatment—and this is precisely what has been done with the Indians all along. The Aborigines are

part and parcel of the Commonwealth, the wards of the Nation, like overgrown children and minors. How heartless to take advantage of the simplicity, credulity and vices of children, to deprive them of their inheritance! How improvident and wicked to discourage the sincere efforts of Christian teachers on the plea that they are sectarian, and prefer to leave the Indian in his filth and ignorance. This is what is being done. I shall always remember the consternation shown by all the traders of Pawhuska seven years ago, at the advent of Catholic priests among the Osages. They, one and all, and successive agents with them, opposed the foundation of our Mission, and one of these, a trader, ("*in whisky veritas*") came over half tipsy to my house and gave me a precious bit of information. "You see, Father," he said, "we don't want you to educate these Indians *we must keep 'em down*. Plenty of money in the business so long as Indians don't know how to read, or write, or count."

After all, that the full blood Indian still wears the blanket or clings to his tribal customs and prefers to remain a stranger to our usages, would be little to be deplored if it did not subject him to such crying injustice on our part. It is said by thoughtless and I should say heartless people that "civilization is fatal to the North American Indian." Well, if that is the case, what are we to think of such civilization which cannot even reclaim the unsophisticated child of the prairie or of the forest to make him better? Modern civilization could not receive a more severe condemnation than that—nay more, it stands convicted, its material progress and wonderful discoveries notwithstanding, of being another form of barbarism little better than what brought the curse of a just God upon pagan Rome.

Compare, if you like, the savage Indian with the savage White, the un-